THE LEPER CLENSED, OR THE REDVCTION *Of an Erring* CHRISTIAN.

Being a Narrative of *Richard Ballamie* of *Tiverton* his falling off to *Anabaptiſm* and of his returning to the Truth, with the cauſes and occaſions of both.

Wherein he is not onely cleared from the Anabaptiſts *unjuſt Excomunicating of him for leaving them, but their unchriſtian waies and wildes to deceive are alſo laid open.*

By him Publiſhed, to caution young ignorant Chriſtians againſt the error of that way.

Eſaiah 29. 24. *They alſo that erred in ſpirit, ſhall come to underſtanding; and they that murmured ſhall learn Doctrine.*

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The Leaper Cleanſed,

IT may ſeem ſtrange to all that know me, to ſee me in print; and if any that ſee me thus appear, judge that it is me main buſineſſe to vindicate my ſelf, they are miſtaken; I am partly driven to this by the irregular proceedings of thoſe who have judged me as an offender, and yet would not give me liberty to ſpeak for my ſelf: So that I am enforced to ſpeak this way, or to juſtifie them by my ſilence; but that which moſt of all prevails with me is,

1. A deſire to give glory to God in acknowledging his mercy, who hath opened my eyes and ſhewed me the errour of my way.

2. I judge it my duty, to labour to undeceive all the ſimple and plain hearted.

3. I think it as neceſſary to diſcover the hypocriſie of ſome that lye in wait to deceive, and by cunning inſinuations and pretences draw aſide many ſouls to their own loſſe, if not to their deſtruction.

It is notoriously known to all the inhabitants of *Tiverton*, that I was deeply engaged in that way, which is commonly known by the name of Anabaptists; yea, so far as that I thought, I was bound to oppose all that dissented from that way, as being antichristian; and so zealous was I to promote that interest, that I forsook my relations, & left my Fathers house, not caring for any society, but such as were for that way; refusing to joyn in prayer with such as differed from me in that, though otherwise godly. Thus I continued for the space of near two yeares, but at last God was pleased to cause me to reflect upon my self and wayes, and by some special providences (of which I shall by and by give an account) he made me willing to stand upon the waies and see, and enquire for the way of the Lord; for untill this time I was so filled with prejudice against the publick ministry, that I refused all conferences and debates with any (though offered with never so much mildnesse) concerning the way in which I was: or if I did at any time admit of any, it was to defend and not to examine it: but now God having put some check upon my spirit; I began to lay things in the ballance, and observing another people in

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this place, walking under Ordinances, an joyned with the publick miniſtry; ſuch thoughts as theſe are would come in ſometimes. We ſay, we are in the way of God, & they ſay they are in the way of God: May not I all this while be miſtaken? Though I often oppoſed ſuch thoughts as theſe, yet they returned upon me by my obſervation; for I could not but take notice that thoſe I walked withall, were looſer both in their principles and practizes, than thoſe I diſſented from; I found them ſleight in their thoughts of the Sabbath, and that they obſerved that day rather out of policy than out of conſcience; not ſo much to ſanctifie the name of God, as to keep their hearers from attending the publick Miniſtry: they ſpeak ſleightly of thoſe that walked ſtrictly and cloſely with God in duty; ſaying, that all the Religion of ſuch lay in duties, but theirs was ſpirituall. I further obſerved, that their families were without prayer generally; their children without inſtruction; and ſurely their conſtant neglect of duties in their families, made me grow very careleſſe of mine in private. The conſideration of theſe things, made me begin to enquire whether this were the truth which I profeſſed. From henceforth I reſolved to conſi-

der what was objected against the way I was in, and to weigh the Arguments I had slighted, because I saw many serious godly people did live in the profession & practice of that which I opposed. And upon serious inquiring into the Word, and earnest seeking of God, it pleased the Lord to satisfie me in the truth: and in particular touching these two controverted truths:

1. That the Covenant of grace, stands now in force to the children of believers under the Gospell.

2. That this is a sufficient ground by Gods appointment, why the children of believers should be baptized: this is evident from many scriptures in the new Testament, which the Anabaptists have endeavoured often to obscure; I shall onely mention one, which was as full to me, *Act.2.39. The Promise is to you, and to your children*; the Anabaptists have laboured to darken this truth, by perswading the world to believe that children have no right to the Promise, till they are actually called, which they would infer from the last claim of the forementioned Text. But by considering I saw their mistake in the Text, (*Call*) hath no relation to children but to them afar off.

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1. Becauſe the children are joyned with their Parents in the promiſe which is an intire propoſition in the Text.

2. If children ſhould be excluded from the promiſe, this could not have comforted the Parents, but have ſadned them, that their children ſhould be the ſame with heathens. Now here the ſcope of the Text is urged by the Apoſtle for conſolation.

3. If ſo; Then this could not encourage the Parents to ſubmit to theſe under this adminiſtration but would have hindred them that their children ſhould be excluded from the promiſe, who ſtood in it for 2000 years before, under the other adminiſtration.

4. If ſo then, children would be ſuperfluous in this Text, and ſo the ſpirit of God would be charged with tautologies, which would be blaſphemy to affirme.

5. The tenſe is changed, the promiſe is to you and your children, in the preſent tenſe; but when he ſpeaks of the call, he ſpeaks in the future tenſe; as many as God *ſhall* call which muſt needs be applied to them afar off, and not to children.

6. If their interpretation hold good, there would be a very great charge in the extent of the covenant, narrower under the

Goſpel then it was under the law, and no notice in all the Book of God given of ſuch a change.

7. If their interpretation be true, then the believing Jews ſhould have loſſe by their repentance, if their children ſhould be excluded from the Promiſe, as ſoon as the Parents had repented.

8. Then they could have no hope of their children, for hope without promiſe is preſumption.

9. If children ſhould be excluded from the promiſe, let any man breathing ſhew me what priviledge the children of repenting parents have above others? Now it is clear the Apoſtle addes children in the Text, to ſhew that they had ſome ſpeciall priviledge above thoſe that were yet uncalled.

10. Then how could the bleſſing of *Abraham* come to the Gentiles according to *Gal.* 3. 14. which bleſſing of *Abraham* was, I will be a God unto thee, and thy ſeed, *Gen.* 17. 7.

11. Then how can believers be heires according to *Gal.* 3. 29. if their children ſhould be excluded from the promiſe, for the childrens right to the promiſe is a part of the fathers Inheritance (For) the promiſe is to thee and thy ſeed.

Laſtly

Laſtly if children be excluded from the promiſe, it ſeemes the Apoſtle went about rather to deceive his hearers then to inform them; it is very unlikely the Apoſtle would uſe the ſame dialect of the Covenant that was formerly uſed to *Abraham* (I am thy God the God of thy ſeed, the promiſe is to you and your children) if it had been his minde, that children ſhould be excluded, I wiſh that men would with unbyaſed hearts weigh thoſe things, and you ſhould ſee that the children of believers as in the promiſe. Further I obſerve that the promiſe is to be conſidered two wayes.

1. As it is inviſibly made, ſo it is alone to the Elect.

As it is viſibly made, ſo it is with viſible profeſſors and their children; whoever is in Covenant in the firſt ſenſe, can never fall away. But many may be in Covenant in the latter ſenſe, who may afterwards degenerate and fall away.

Here let the impartial Reader take notice that the Covenant, as it is viſibly exhibited, is the ground for Baptiſm; ſeeing the ſubjects of the Covenant internally are known to God alone, this diſtinction of the Covenant is clear from *Rom.* 9. 4. where the Apoſtle ſayes, the Covenant *pertains* to them,

them, and yet the Apoſtle was in great heavineſſe for them, *verſ.* 2. Its clear from *Acts* 3.25. where the Jews are called the *Children of the Covenant*, and yet but few of them internally in the Covenant. Its clear from *Iohn* 1.11. where they are called, *Gods own*, which could not be by creation, for ſo all are his own; neither could it be by ſpeciall grace, for ſaith the Text, they rejected Chriſt: Then it muſt needs follow, that there was a viſible Church-covenant or covenant of grace viſibly exhibited, that gave them a claim to God.

In a word this muſt be acknowledged by the Anabaptiſts themſelves, elſe how can they call themſelves a viſible Church of Chriſt, if there be no viſible exhibition of the Covenant to give men ſuch a viſible relation; for there is no claime to God but by Covenant.

In this ſenſe we are to underſtand, the children of Believers, in the promiſe according to the meaning of the Apoſtle in *Act.* 2.39. Now this Covenant right, is a ground which God himſelf layes down, why any ſhould be baptized, *Act.* 2.38. he requires baptiſme, *verſ.* 39 ſhewes the reaſon *For the promiſe is to you.* Here I deſire the reader to take notice, how the word of com-

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mand depends upon the word of promiſe, and with an inſeparable union and Connextion there is between the command and the promiſe, the ſame reaſon alledged by the Apoſtle, why the parent ſhould be Baptized is rendred by the ſame Apoſtle, as a reaſon why the children ſhould be Baptized, (for the promiſe is to you and your Children) nay the very ſame comand expreſſed to baptize the one is implied to baptize the other, for if ſome or any to whom the promiſe is made, may not be baptiſed there can be no force in the Apoſtles argument.

Thus the Lord ſatisfied me about Infant-baptiſme.

Being thus far ſatisfied I went to heare the publick Miniſtry, but this comming to the eares of the Anabaptiſts, there came three of their ſociety the next day to me to have an account concerning this thing; I told them if they pleaſe to come at a time appointed I would give them the reaſons of my withdrawing from them; and accordingly they came, the preachers & the principaleſt among them, where I gave them an account of my withdrawing from them, as many of my friends can bear witneſſe, which was as followeth,

1. Their denying the children of Believers

Believers a right to the Covenant.

2. Living in constant neglect of an Ordinance of Christ (*viz.*) singing of Psalms.

3. For neglecting of Family duty, maintaining it to be a mans liberty, not his duty to pray in his Family.

4. For denying the power of the Magistrate for punishing of evil doers: (to wit, Quakers.)

5. For sleighting the publick Ministry.

I offered to give them a farther account of my withdrawing from the hypocrisie and wickedness of one *William Facye*, who is their present Pastor, but they refused to hear, and desired I would not cast dirt to their face; I desired that they would please to give an account what they had against me; but I could get nothing but this from them (*viz.*) You are withdrawn from us, and have neglected your place amongst us.

Then they solicited me again to return to them, but seeing they could not prevail, they summoned me to appear before them such a day. I told them if I might have the liberty to bring some friends of mine with me, I would meet with them; this being granted and the day assigned, I desired Mr. *Fortescue Lowman* Minister of the Word in

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Cadlie, with ſome other friends to be preſent, whom I found very ready, and accordingly at the time appointed, came with me to their meeting, where were preſent ſome of the ableſt of that party in theſe parts, Both from *Plymouth*, *Dartmouth*, *Totnes*, *Bonytracy*, *Bompton* and ſeveral other parts, whom they had invited to aſsiſt them; and it is remarkable to behold the juſt hand of the Lord, who will not bear with ſinne, nor ſuffer his truth to fall to the ground; aſſoon as we came into their meetting, it pleaſed the Lord to ſtrike ſuch a damp upon their ſpirits, and caſt them into ſuch an hurrey, that not a man among them would engage to juſtifie their proceedings, but one *Thomas Claſſe* (who was not of that ſociety, but a Teacher of a company of them at *Bonytracy*) in the name of the reſt of the Anabaptiſts, deſired that all ſuch as were not members of their ſociety would withdraw. I told them if my friends ſhould not be preſent with me according to appointment, I would withdraw alſo (knowing the inconveniency of being with them alone, when there was no one to teſtifie the plain truth of things) He told me if I would deny the authority of Chriſt and his Church, I might. Unto whom I replyed; That the authority

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of Christ I did own, but your authority I did deny. *William Facy* not willing to be laid open, joyned with this motion, and desired my friends to withdraw: Then Mr. *Lowman* told them he had something to propose to them before he did withdraw, if they pleased, *Thomas Glasse* replyed, pray withdraw, for you have nothing to do here. So we withdrew, and one of my friends said, Report no more that we refuse to give you a meeting: which false report they have often spread to deceive the simple, and to carry on their designe by perswading the ignorant into an opinion, that such as differ from them, have nothing to say from Gods word to justifie their practice.

The same night came *Thomas Glasse* (it is worth inquiring, why they sent not their own Pastor *William Facy*, if they were not ashamed of him or he to look on me) and one of his brethren to my house with a messuage from the rest of the Anabaptists, to declare that they had rejected me. Mr. *Lowman* being present, desired to know by what Rule they walked to reject a man for withdrawing upon such just and reasonable grounds, as I had before urged: But *Thom. Glasse* refused to entertain any conference with him for his satisfaction, and told him

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they had nothing to do with him; and being asked, why they denyed my friends liberty to be preſent in their meeting, according to appointment, and refuſed to give Mr. *Lowman* liberty to propoſe what he had to offer them. *Thomas Glaſſe* brake out in a pettiſh fit, ſaying, That vve had attempted to diſturbe them in the worſhip of God, and charged us with abuſing the name of God, and his people with inciviliry, diſhoneſty and want of knowledge; and withall affirmed, that he was imployed by the reſt of his Brethren to tell us ſo: Unto which Mr. *Lowman* replyed, If you are imployed by your Brethren to give us ſuch language, pray be pleaſed to return this meſſuage again, That I humbly conceive they have done us the wrong, to appoint ſuch a meeting with us, and when we came, to deny us liberty to be preſent; and now to ſend ſuch language after us. 1. We did not diſturb you in your worſhip of God, for we did neither ſee nor hear you about any religious exerciſe when we came, neither did we ſpeak a word till you bid us depart, neither were uncivill with you, for we withdrew according to your deſire. *Tho. Glaſſe* being deſired to ſhew ſome reaſon for giving ſuch ſlanderous words, replied, that he was not

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come to diſpute, but to declare in the name of their Church that they had rejected me, the particulars of my charge, was as followeth.

1. That I had withdrawn from their ſociety; and neglected my place amongſt them.

2. That I had villified ſome of their Brethren, whom I had forgiven.

3. That I had villified ſome of their Brethren for denying Magiſtracy, neglect of family duty, ſinging of Pſalms.

4. That I had abuſed my father in law.

Theſe things put together, *Tho. Glaſs* & one more of his *Brethren* did in the name of the Church, declare me *guilty of Blaſphemy* [You may judge this was a learned aſſembly that brought this charge to ſuch a concluſion] and they were ſent to tell me they had rejected me.

Now that you may ſee the irregular proceedings of ſuch as pretend to religion and under that pretence draw away many poor ſoules from thoſe means, which God hath bleſſed for their converſion and edification, to the end ſuch may be warned to take heed, give me leave to anſwer to my charge and I ſhall ſpeake nothing but the plain truth, and let the moderate judge where the guilt lies.

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for withdrawing from them.

I judge it a great bleſſing, that the Lord hath ſo far opened my eyes as to bring me out from among them, which will eaſily appear if you remember the grounds I have alleadged, and ſhall yet urge from their wickedneſſe as well of practice as principles that I found amongſt them; inſomuch that I wonder how the ſober amongſt them could walk with them hitherto. But this I ſhall ſhew you in anſwer in the ſecond branch of my charge; which is a villifying ſome members which (ſay they) I have forgiven. The occaſion of this charge they bring againſt me is as followeth.

William Facy, their preſent Paſtor walked ſo diſorderly, his wickedneſſe was ſo great, that they could do no leſs then ſuſpend him: But ſo ſleightly did they deale in the buſineſſe that his ſuſpenſion pretended repentance and admition againe, was all within one week; ſhortly after he fained himſelf mad, and began to play prankes with his wife: called for a baſon to let out his bloud, pretending that he would cut his throat, goes to caſt his childe in the fire, which child ſhortly after ſickned and died; ſo much of this I was both an eye and eare witneſſe unto: for his wife came crying to

me, that she was afraid to abide with him in house; gave me a relation of these things, desiring me to come with her to her husband; when I came I found him on the bed: I asked him how he did, but he gave me no answer, after some time I had been there, he arose and goes from his house; this wickedness committed by him was deemed then by the Anabaptists (as was by afterward himself acknowledged) to be out of a design to get some mony from his wife, having married a widdow which kept certain bills or bonds of debt in some friends hands, least he should consume it; for which the Anabaptists suspended him again, and in a little time received him again; wherein I was never satisfied to this day; and in testimony of my dissatisfaction I refused to sit down with them at the Lords table ever since. Now they charge me for vilifying some of their members, when I speak nothing but the plain truth in declaring against their sin, and they say I have forgiven him, when I were thus unsatisfied in his repentance, and now judge it but fained; for he that could so artificially counterfeit madnesse, could easily counterfeit sadnesse.

4. He cryes down the publique Ministery; for taking offerings, when as shortly after

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that his Bretheren had admitted him to their Communion and fellowship, he tells them, that unlesse they would engage to give him 30l. by the year he would leave them.

2. He is a notorious lyer that makes little conscience of his word, and hath reported many untruths, touching the publique Ministers of *Tiverton*, nay justifyes himself in lyes when he is reproved. There was a young man who wrote notes after Mr. *Lowman*, preaching upon the Doctrine of the Covenant in *Tiverton*; which notes this young man delivered to one of the Anabaptist who gave them to *William Facy*, within three or four dayes after, this young man came to *William Facy* and demanded these notes which he plainly and peremtorily denyed saying, he had them not. But *William Facy* with drawing the room, the young man espies those notes on the table, and takes them into his hand; *William Facy* comes in, and perceiving the notes in his hand takes the notes by force out of his hand, when the young man reported this to some of his friends, *William Facy* comes to this young man, and calls him lyer before his master (the young man being then a servant;) but the young man produced another to testifie the truth of this matter,

who was with him at *William Facyes* houſe, and heard him deny the Sermon notes; afterwards Mr. *Lowman* meeting with *William Facy* reproved him for lying: *William Facy* to juſtifie himſelf, tells Mr. *Lowman* that the young man had cleared him in this matter before his maſter, which being examined was found a lye. [So here were three lyes, 1. He denies the Notes, 2. He denies that he did deny them, 3. He affirmes that the young man had cleared him, which were all falſe.] Severall untruths hath *William Facy* reported, which upon examination hath plainly and clearly appeared ſo to be; yet they continue him their paſtor.

Yet they themſelves have given it under their hands, that he is not fit to manage a diſcourſe to vindicate their practice and way in which they now walk. For there was a diſpute appointed between Mr. *Lowman* & *William Facy*, which was occaſioned by ſome oppoſition from the Anabaptiſts in *Brampton*, where *William Facy* & his followers came and oppoſed Mr. *Lowman* in the Pulpit, who entertained ſome diſcourſe with him before the Congregation, and then referred it to a day of publick diſpute. The queſtion to be debated was (whither the infants of believers were in Covenant

nant.) But *William Facy* being desirous to new state the Question, came to Mr. *Lowmans* house and in the presence of severall, *Swore upon the faith of a Christian*, that the Question to be discoursed was not, whether Infants were in Covenant: But whether Infants were to be Baptised, (where you may see, that such as make little Conscience what they say, will make little Conscience what they swear,) Master *Lowman* reproving him for swearing; told him that the question to be discoursed should be given under each others hand; and if he desired to have the Question so stated, it should be done: the time and place was appointed, the Question stated, given in Writing. The Anabaptists willing to wave the business, imployed a modest man of their own party, one Mr. *Nathaniel Strange* with some others of their Brethren, of which *Thomas Glasse* was one, to come and treat with Mr. *Lowman* in order to wave the dispute. Mr. *Lowman* desired to know the reason of their retreat, they told him because *William Facy* was uncapable to manage such an undertaking. Mr. *Lowman* asked if they would give it under their hands, which accordingly they did, and subscribed it in the name of the rest of their Brethren; upon

which the diſpute was prevented: yet notwithſtanding *William Facy* is their paſtor.

I wiſh that the plain hearted among them would but ſeriouſly conſider, whether they can poſſibly expect a bleſſing from heaven, under ſuch a mans Miniſtery, whoſe courſe I have a little hinted to you, and judge you whither I have not cauſe to withdraw where ſuch iniquitie is indulged.

The third particular of my charge, is for charging ſome of the Anabaptiſts with denying magiſtrates and the neglecting of family duties and ſinging of Pſalms.

Let me tell you, I do not charge you without a cauſe, for thoſe things abound in you at that rate; that ſeeing you and ſin will not part, you and I muſt part; and though ſome of you are dear to me (whom I truſt the Lord will convince in his due time) yet the Lord Jeſus is nearer and dearer, whoſe communion I muſt, and through grace do prize before yours, had you & I continued it to be feared, the Lord & I ſhould have parted: for while I ſat under your miniſtry, I could never find that bleſſing which I have found from that miniſtry you deſpiſe. That tenderneſſe which the Lord wrought upon my ſpirit by the publick miniſtry before I came among you, did much decay while I con-

continued with you, and therefore tis no small mercy that the Lord hath brought me from you.

1. For denying the power of Magistrates it is notoriously known to many good people of *Tiverton* how you have carped at the Magistracy there for executing their power upon sabbath breakers and quakers, yea you confessed, & pleaded it against me, as many of my friends can testify, when I charged you with it, affirming that Magistrates had nothing to do with Quakers.

2. For neglect of family duties you cannot without blushing, say that I wrong you in charging the neglect of it upon you: being conscious to your selves, that many of your families call not upon God, which I can confidently affirm upon my own personall knowledge, when I walked with you besides when I charged you with it, you affirmed that it was a mans Liberty and not his duty, to pray in his family, as my friends can testify who were then present.

3. For neglecting to sing Psalmes an ordinance of Christ, you never performed this duty in your assemblies, but when I charged you with this, you affirmed it to be no better then ballads, as my friends can testify also. I come to the fourth and last parti-

cular of my charge for abuſing my father.

But whether by word or deed, or in what manner you gave me no account; But ſure I am, if I were guilty of ſuch a thing, you never reproved me: I muſt confeſſe that when I walked with you through your inſtigation I took up many hard thoughts, both of my father and mother, becauſe they laboured to convince me of mine errour: yea and I left my fathers houſe upon this very account, as I have hinted before, but through mercy, the Lord hath ſhewed me my evill in ſo doing, yet you were never the people that admoniſhed me all the while I walked with you. But now you act as if you would rejoyce if you could take up any thing to reproach me and ſet variance between the father and the ſon.

But had I been guilty of every ſyllable of which you charge me with, how can you bring it to Blaſphemy. The truth is *Thomas Giaſſe*, made many ſad ſhifts to mince the matter, when he was deſired to make forth wherein I had been guilty of *Blaſphemy*.

But let all modeſt ſober Chriſtians judge, whither that which lies in the bottom be not my diſcovering their wickedneſſe, and withdrawing from them, though I could not in conſcience continue longer with them

them, when God ſaid, Come out from among them; which makes them to forge ſomething againſt me: and let the reader judge where lies the guilt.

Thus I have given you a brief Narrative of the principalls and practices of theſe Anabaptiſts, having walked with them and tryed them; and likewiſe an account of Gods gracious dealing in bringing me from them, to attend the publick miniſtry, and of their unjuſt proceedings againſt me in this matter.

If the good Lord make it uſefull for the good of any poor ſoule to undeceive him, and bring him into the way of God, or to prevent any from departing out of Gods way, I ſhall rejoyce, ſo that God may not looſe his glory, nor any of his people looſe their comfort: which if you tender, be ſure to prize, thoſe wayes in which you received the firſt conviction, leaſt you one day lye dovvn in ſorrow for going away from God, and from the ſtriving of his Spirit. Let me ask you that have withdrawn from that Miniſtry; to whom you can ſay, we are your work of the Lord: have you the ſame tenderneſſe, the ſame affections to God, that you once had in former dayes: are not theſe much decayed? O return from whence you are fallen and repent. And

And now I ſhall conclude by giving the reader an account of the ſad experience that I have had in two yeares digreſſion from the publique miniſtry in *Tyverton*, which God did at firſt bleſſe to the awakening of my ſoul.

1. I do not remember that I have had one Conviction under all the ſermons which I heard whilſt I walked with them; But that ſence of my condition which I had before did abate and by little and little fall away; after I turned my back upon the means which God made uſe of in working upon me. Therefore I beg of all thoſe upon whoſe hearts God is working to take heed of deſpiſing or ſlighting thoſe inſtruments with whom God is preſent.

2. I was drawn off by theſe men, when I was in the greateſt probability of receiving good from the miniſtery that ever I was: For I do remember ſtill the Impreſſions which were made upon my ſoul by thoſe truths which I heard from Mr. *Chiſhull* a little before I was thus drawn aſide, which did work mightily to conviction and to reſolution in me, but the devil envying my proſperity, ſent me this Thorn in the fleſh, and their Inſinuations and temptations did ſo prevaile with me, that I left this moi-

ministry to attend on them; which was but a diversion from the work of my soul and I find that whereas before I had somthings of weigh upon my spirit, these were soon laid aside, and I had nothing to doe but to dispute about baptisme, and to rayle against ministers; so that my former awakenings were turned into drousineſſe and doating about questions.

3. As I found no profit my self by attending upon their teaching; so I observed little to any other. Nay it hath been not onely mine but the experience of others, who have constantly attended them as long as my self, that there was nothing but deadneſſe of Spirit, to be gained there, which hath at last caused them to desert them also.

4 They are very vigilant and watchfull to find out any that are convinced and awakened under the publique ministry, and when they begin to see things a little darkly and confusedly, they take the advantage of this twilight in which their souls are to put off their commodities, where their souls have some *tenderneſſe*, and yet a great deal of *ignorance*, they are fit to be wrought upon by them for by reason of the first, they dare not neglect a Command of God, and by reason of the second, it ap-

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pears to them that it is neceſſary to be dipt.

And they effect this eſpecially by theſe means, *Firſt* ſhewing them very much kindneſſe, and pretending very great love and bowels of pity to their ſoules, and they ſtand like *Abſalom* in the gate by fair ſpeeches to draw the hearts of people from their Miniſters.

2. *By* promiſing them very much peace in their way, and telling how much peace they have found ſince they entred into this way; and this is a very great notice to ſoules, who have ſome troubles accompanying their awakeings, and indeed there are very few of their hearers or followers troubled in Spirit, for they want a ſearching Miniſtry. I fear they get ſuch a peace as I did by looſing my conviction.

3. When they ſee that any do incline to them and their way in judgement, they do preſſe them to a ſpeedy ſubmiſſion to *Baptiſme*, that they may not have time to deliberate about it, or to goe to the Miniſter, or any chriſtian friends to adviſe.

4. Let me therefore from my experience, warn all young Chriſtians to watch in this caſe; for know that if the devill cannot keep off the word from your hearts, he will then draw you off, if it be poſſible, from that word

word and Miniſtry which he ſees doth profit you. And doubtleſſe he hath gotten much by this deſigne; And many ſoules will at laſt lament what I now do (*viz.*) that they were ſo ſoon perſwaded to leave the means in which God did vouchſafe to ſtruggle with their ſoules, and if any ſuch Temptation do come in your way, I beſeech you to deliberate about it, and though it be backt with promiſes of peace; yet enquire whither that which others call peace, may not be more fitly called ſlumber.

5. I have ſeen how they labour to hold thoſe by policy, whom they have gained by craft; they hinder all that incline to them from hearing any that diſcent from them as much as in them lies, though never ſo godly; Nay though they acknowledge that they have been the Inſtruments of their Converſion. Nay they do abſtaine from all ſociety with Chriſtians that are principalled & ſettled in their judgements, & able to defend them; leaſt any of their weak ones ſhould heare any thing that contradicts their principles: ſo that it is nothing but ignorance, of what is to be ſaid againſt their principles and practiſes, that keeps the greateſt part of their followers to them. Let me therefore beg you, that would know the truth, to

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waigh what is brought against, as well as what is to be spoken for your opinion, for it is an argument of weaknesse and guilt when we shun the tryall: The papists are Conscious that their opinions and practices would not stand if the Scriptures should be opened to the people, and doubtlesse many of you do fear what would follow, if your hearers should know what ministers do or can offer to the people against your way. But it is easy to keep them to you, who must receive your interpretations of Scriptures and no other.

6. They do presse very vigorously obedience to all the commands of God, and in Generals they will seem zealous for God, and holinesse: But when it comes to particulars, all their zeal runs out into a submission to their way; as if there were nothing of that weight that Dipping is on: But for the mortification of sin, for the setting up of Religion in Families, for performing the respective duties of their Relations, these are not minded, so that I must professe though I have heard them rayle Ministers as Scribes and Pharisees, yet I never saw any Generation of men, that did more resemble the Scribes and Pharisees then they in this sin that they laid up

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their Religion much in litttle things, in certain waſhings, and ſo did theſe: they have more charity many of them for Quakers and Ranters, then for thoſe that conform not to the Baptiſm.

I ſpeak not this of all, for as I have ſaid; I believe there is a mixture of godly amongſt them, for vvhoſe ſakes I vvrite theſe things, that they may be vvarned.

And novv I bleſs the Lord, that he hath brought me back again, and given me a taſt of the ſweetneſſe of the publique Miniſtry in this place: And that I find God meeting my ſoul, and ſtirring a freſh upon my ſpirit; and I cannot but pray and mourn for thoſe that yet remain under the temptations, with which I was holden a long time: I truſt yet, that the time is comming, that many more of them will ſee the evil of their wayes as I have done; and be humbled as I have been; and deſire yet to be more and more before the Lord.

FINIS.